

PEN – Progressive Economic Narrative

Writing a Short Speech on an Issue

This worksheet is a guide to writing a short speech on an issue, within the frame of of An America that Works for All of Us. Use this outline and fill in the blanks and in a short time you'll have a powerful speech!

Good morning. My name is _____.

Today I want to talk to you about how we build an America and a *[state]* that works for all of us, not just the *wealthy few*. Where all our families and communities can thrive, regardless of the circumstances we are born into.

and/or another 'villain that works for your issue, e.g. CEO's, Wall Street

We often hear about how the economy is booming, but for too many families in our state, it doesn't feel that way. Today, we see that *[state's]* working families and middle class are getting squeezed.

1-2 sentences that describes how this relates to your issue →

e.g. People are working longer hours for less pay, making it hard to afford the basics.

But this is no accident. *Identify the 'villain' that is responsible and what they do that is bad.* →

e.g. Powerful corporations hold down wages and benefits.

They get away with it by using campaign donations and lobbyists to manipulate the rules to benefit them – at our expense.

It doesn't have to be this way. Together we can create an America and *[state]* that works for all of us, not just the wealthy few. That's why we must work together to *[state your quest and what value it will achieve.]* →

e.g. Provide great neighborhood public schools where every child has the opportunity to learn.

Examples of values are: opportunity; security; freedom; strong communities.

You know, working people and the middle class are the engines of our economy. When we have good jobs so that we can care for and support our families. When we can educate our children, shop in our neighborhoods. When we can afford health care and retire in security, we drive our economy forward and build thriving communities.

It's time we rewrite the rules to *bolster working families and build a strong middle-class*. In order to *[restate your quest]*

e.g. create a better world for our children

we need to *[provide your specific policy solution – and describe it in values language]*

e.g. guarantee paid sick days so working people can care for their themselves and their loved ones and still meet the basics for their families.

When we do that, it's important that we take down the barriers – *[name barriers that cause racial disparities for this issue]*

e.g. hiring discrimination, a biased criminal justice system

that block equal opportunity for Blacks and Latinos. Our success depends on the success of those around us. Our communities thrive when everyone thrives.

Of course, none of us can do this alone. The powerful benefit by dividing the rest of us by our race or gender or where we come from, while they rig the economic rules in their favor. But we can come together across racial and other differences to build an America that works for all of us, not just the wealthy few and well-connected.

The question is not whether government is big or small – it's who government works for? *[name your villain again]* or working families and the middle class. It's up to us to hold our elected officials accountable for standing up for working people and the middle class .

We can *[restate a values-based version of your issue/purpose]*

e.g. assure good wages to care for and support our families.

We can do this! This is what America is about. This is what *[State]* is about. Together we can build an America, a *[State]* that works for all of us!